



InTouch

January - March 2004

Volume Ten - Number One

Committee for Ethnic Affairs

Established by County Code in Article VII of Chapter 27 (§27-53 et seq.), the mission of the Committee for Ethnic Affairs is to advise the Executive and the Council on public policy that relates to the County's diverse communities, and to emphasize the richness of the County's linguistic and cultural diversity while promoting interchange and interaction among the many groups that represent these communities.

Earlier in December, the Committee held a holiday party that featured Persian and international musical performances. The Committee is presently sponsoring an exhibition of artifacts, artworks and cultural items in the Executive Office Building lobby, available for viewing during business hours at 101 Monroe Street in Rockville.

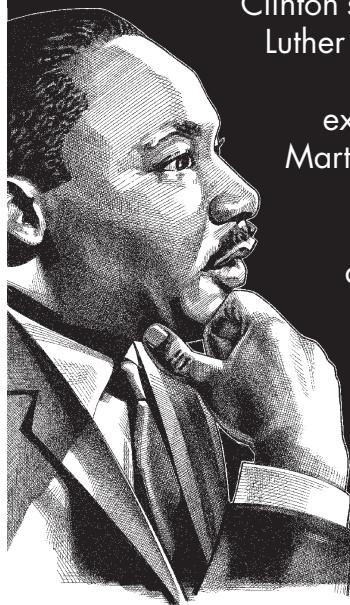
continued on page 4



Committee on Ethnic Affairs: Front (l to r): Siham Eldadah, Irene Coleman, Jeredine Williams, Lubna Ejaz, Renuka Sahay, Mary Bazagan, Alexis Kohn. Back: Terry Vann, Shou-shan Fan, Jennifer Sinclair Hankerson, Awo Sarpong Ansu, Homa Chetry. Not pictured are Soonhoon Ahn, Ari Brooks, Yuchi Huang, Ismail Kenessy, Young Hwan Kim and Alma Lopez-Mitchell.

County to Commemorate Dr. King's Birthday on January 19

On August 23, 1994, then President Bill Clinton signed into law the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday and Service Act, which expanded the mission of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday Commission to promote the holiday as a day of community service, interracial cooperation and youth antiviolence initiatives. In addition, the Act established a legislative relationship between the King



continued on page 7

Black History Month

Black History Month is a time dedicated to pay special homage to the contributions that African Americans have made throughout the history of the United States. The observance of a special period to recognize achievements and contributions of African Americans dates to 1926, when Dr. Carter G. Woodson launched Negro History Week. This weeklong celebration eventually evolved into a month long observance, designated as February of each year.

African American men and women have made great contributions to the history and culture of the United States and the world. Black people are represented in every field of endeavor, and have been a force for change and improvement.

continued on page 6

Message from the County Executive



DOUGLAS M. DUNCAN

Dear Friends:

Over the past year, Montgomery County has increased outreach efforts to ensure access to services for all County residents. In the Office of Community Outreach (OCO), there have been some changes. While Tina Clarke continued her duties as African American Liaison, Debbie Resnick joined OCO as Manager, and Shu-Ping Chan began as liaison to the Asian Pacific American community. More recently, Joe Heiney-Gonzalez transferred from the Department of Health and Human Services to OCO to serve as liaison to the Latino/Hispanic community. These outreach efforts to build bridges among the diverse communities in the County continue to enhance our ability to be responsive, accountable and accessible.

Last October, I convened a Diversity Summit for all County department directors and agency heads. The summit was held to reinforce my administration's commitment to diversity in the County workforce, as well as to ensure full access to services for all residents. I am happy to report that the summit was a success, and departments are continuing to implement strategies to eliminate any remaining barriers to service. In addition, the County's 2004 Diversity Work Plan was recently completed. It outlines each department's programs and initiatives in the area of diversity. To obtain a copy, please call (240) 777-5000.

Emulating the County's African American Health Program and the Latino Health Initiative, leaders of Asian Pacific American organizations are working to propose a similar initiative for this community. Whether focusing on diseases that may be prevalent in a particular community or providing care in an environment that is culturally and linguistically welcoming, these programs can be vital links in the health care delivery system for all Montgomery County residents. I encourage and support these efforts and look forward to working with community leaders and health care professionals of all three programs to ensure their continued success. For more information on these initiatives, please call (240) 777-2500.

Best wishes for success in the new year!

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

Douglas M. Duncan, County Executive
Bruce Romer, Chief Administrative Officer
Parker Hamilton, Assistant CAO

Office of Community Outreach:

Debbie Resnick, Manager
Shu-Ping Chan, Asian Pacific American Liaison
Tina Clarke, African American/Black Liaison
Joe Heiney-Gonzalez, Latino/Hispanic Liaison

101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland 20850
(240) 777-2500 Fax: (240) 777-2517
www.montgomerycountymd.gov

Submissions, comments and event announcements can be emailed to:

InTouch@montgomerycountymd.gov. Those received by the first of March, June, September or December will be considered for the next issue of *In Touch*. Articles may be reproduced or translated into other languages with attribution.

In Touch is free of charge and is published quarterly by the Office of Community Outreach in the Offices of the County Executive, Montgomery County, Maryland. To be on the mailing list, please call (240) 777-2500 or email InTouch@montgomerycountymd.gov



County Executive Douglas M. Duncan, joined by other dignitaries, cuts ribbon that officially opened the Pan Asian American Volunteer Health Clinic on November 18, 2003.

Asian American Health Clinic Opens

On November 18, the Pan Asian American Volunteer Health Clinic celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony featuring County Executive Douglas M. Duncan. The clinic is housed in Montgomery County's community clinic building located at 2000 Dennis Avenue in Silver Spring. It offers free medical services to individuals with financial need who have no alternative access to health care.

The key element to this clinic is the bilingual medical staff members who volunteer their services. The three organizations sponsoring the clinic, Chinese Culture and Community Service Center (CCACC), MobileMed and Primary Care Coalition (PCC), found the biggest barriers for many Asian Americans in accessing health care, particularly the elderly, to be lack of insurance coverage, and inability to find service in an environment that is linguistically and culturally welcoming. The clinic addresses both of these needs.

Currently, the primary languages of clinic volunteers are Chinese and Korean. For patients needing services in another language, arrangements can be made for an interpreter.

The unique expertise of each of the founding organizations is used in this creative partnership. CCACC brings the bilingual medical staff, MobileMed has administrative responsibilities, and PCC provides the facilities and supplies, along with support from the County. Although currently open only on Tuesday evenings, the clinic is planning to double its size and hours of operation over the next year. For more information or to make an appointment, please call (301) 670-1180.

Latino Health Initiative

With the support of County Executive Douglas M. Duncan and the County Council, the County's Latino Health Initiative (LHI) was launched with the purpose of developing and implementing an integrated, coordinated culturally and linguistically appropriate health wellness system to serve the unique health care needs of the Latino families and communities in Montgomery County.

Now in its third year, the LHI is working in collaboration with the County's African American Health Program to identify common issues and strategies to reduce and eliminate health disparities that impact the County's diverse communities. It also supports the efforts of the Asian Pacific American community in establishing a similar health initiative.

continued on page 6

Community Outreach Forum

The Office of Community Outreach in the County Executive's office has initiated the Community Outreach Forum with the goal of coordinating outreach efforts in the County to ensure efficient, effective and responsive service to all residents, communities and organizations.

The sharing of resources, best practices and experiences is critical to effective community outreach. Part of the Forum's goal is to eliminate redundancies and duplications in the outreach efforts of different departments. For example, the Forum is working to ensure uniformity in implementing the County policy on serving residents who face limited English proficiency.

Another Forum project is to develop plans for rapid transmittal of information to all communities during emergencies or disasters.

The Forum is comprised of outreach personnel from various County departments and agencies who meet monthly to share information and coordinate delivery of services to isolated individuals and communities, those facing linguistic or cultural barriers, and those who have been historically underrepresented in government.

The Forum will be open to government offices outside the County's executive branch, including County Council, congressional and senatorial offices, and municipalities located inside the County. A subcommittee of the Forum will meet with nonprofit organizations at regular intervals on issues in their areas of interest.

For more information on the Community Outreach Forum, please call Debbie Resnick at (240) 777-2500.

Ethnic Affairs *from page 1*

The Committee holds meetings at 7:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month in the Executive Office Building. Anyone living or working in Montgomery County wishing to serve on the Committee for Ethnic Affairs may contact Debbie Resnick at (240) 777-2500. Below is information on current Committee Members.

Serving her second year as Chair, **Renuka Sahay** is a consultant for immigration law firms in the area, having previously served on Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board. She is a past recipient of the International Women of the Year Award, and now directs the Pushpanjali School of Indian Dance in Germantown.

Soonhoon Lee Ahn is principal of AHN Consulting of Bethesda, which provides expertise in global career management and human resources. She also serves as a career counselor at the Howard Community College, and teaches career planning in northern Virginia. A presenter at the UN Conference on Women in Beijing, she also authored works for the UN on recruitment. Mrs. Ahn and her family have been Bethesda residents for 25 years.

Originally from the West African nation of Ghana, **Awo Sarpong Ansu** is an attorney with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Ms. Ansu lives with her husband in Silver Spring.

Mary Bazargan, president of Majestic Travel in Rockville, has dedicated her energies to working with the Iranian American community. She was nominated as the Maryland State Delegate to the White House Conference on Travel and Tourism, and has served on the UN Committee on the Status of Women.

Ari Brooks is the executive director of Friends of the Library, a nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing library services in the County. Holding a MSW from the Univ. of Pennsylvania and a BA in sociology from the Univ. of Virginia, Ms. Brooks has held a number of posts with public interest and social work organizations in Montgomery County.

Homa Chetry hails from the Kingdom of Nepal, located in the heart of the Himalayas. Mr. Chetry earned an advanced degree in international affairs from Western Washington Univ., and has served as

associate director for the Peace Corps in Nepal. He and his wife live in Montgomery Village.

Irene Coleman is a retired educator with almost four decades of teaching experience specializing in child development, reading, and human relations. She has served as negotiator, trainer, facilitator and mentor in various educational and community settings. She is a Life Member of the NAACP, and a Sister in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

Originally from the Philippines, **Lubna Ejaz** graduated with highest honors from Manila's Univ. of the East. A CPA, she currently manages high level projects for clients of a large international data processing company. Ms. Ejaz serves on the board of the Pakistan Assoc. of Greater Washington and the NAACP Multi-Cultural Partnership. A resident of Brookeville, she and her husband Azad have three grown sons.

Siham Eldadah serves as Secretary for the Committee on Ethnic Affairs, and chairs the Subcommittee for Ethnic Creativity in the Arts. Ms. Eldadah provides translation services for Arabic speaking families in the schools, and teaches an after-school class in Arabic at Wheaton High.

Dr. Shou-shan Fan is an Adjunct Research Professor at Clarkson Univ. After retiring from the U.S. Dept. of Energy, he now chairs the Task Force on Flood and Drought Disasters for the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Jennifer Sinclair Hankerson is a manager for one of the region's largest real estate development companies. An active member of the community, she and husband Roland recently celebrated their one year anniversary.

Dr. Yuchi Huang is a business executive and university professor. He is a past president and current Advisory Committee member of the Chinese Culture and Community Service Center (CCACC). Dr. Huang was a member of Montgomery County Advisory Council for Career and Technology Education. He is a board member of Madison Chinese Dance Academy and Washington School of Chinese Language.

continued on page 5

Ethnic Affairs *from page 4*

Originally from Tunisia, **Ismail Kenessy** has lived in Montgomery County for over 20 years. He is a senior accountant with a large international construction company. He and his wife Javairia live in Bethesda with their 5-month-old daughter.

B. Alexis Kohn, a real estate professional, has dedicated her community service efforts to Jewish organizations and synagogues in Colorado and New York before coming to Montgomery County. She was the only non-Italian in the Italian Cultural Society in Syracuse NY, and was Senior Marshall in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Syracuse.

Terry Vann, a retired attorney who currently provides mediation and facilitation services for several organizations, is an officer of the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington, and Board member of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. He is active in the Interfaith Council, and is a former member and program chair of Montgomery County's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Committee.

Jeredine Williams is executive director of Migrant and Refugee Cultural Support, Inc. (MIRECS), a Silver Spring nonprofit organization which advocates for the rights of immigrant victims of domestic violence.

Bilingual Poll Workers Needed

Montgomery County's Board of Elections is in search of 150 Spanish and English speaking individuals to serve as Poll Workers during the 2004 Presidential Primary and Election. Residency in Montgomery County is not a requirement, but applicants must be 1) 18 years of age or older by November 2, 2004, 2) a U.S. citizen, 3) registered to vote in the State of Maryland, and 4) have bilingual fluency at a level to assist voters.

In addition to Spanish, Poll Workers with fluency in Chinese, French, Korean and Vietnamese are also needed.

Poll Workers will receive pay for the training period and for their service on primary and election days. For more information, please contact Dr. Gilberto Zelaya at (240) 777-8505. To download information and an application form, visit the County's website link: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/elections/unclesam04.pdf



Volunteer on a Board, Commission or Committee in 2004

Volunteers make a difference in Montgomery County. County government depends on the participation and contributions of residents who lend their expertise and experience to over 80 County boards, committees and commissions whose members are appointed by the County Executive, most of which require confirmation by the County Council. Public participation on these boards provides a valuable service to the County by bringing the concerns and viewpoints of residents on a variety of important issues.

A variety of factors are considered in appointments, including diversity of background and profession; relevant experience and expertise; and geographic, gender and ethnic balance. Increasing the diversity on boards continues to be a priority for the County Executive. He wants to ensure that the concerns of all communities are

heard when critical issues are discussed, and policy decisions are made.

A listing of all boards and related information (including how to apply, policies and procedures, description of boards) is available on the County's website www.montgomerycountymd.gov – click Volunteers, then Boards, Committees and Commissions. Service on boards is open to those living or working in the County. Interested individuals can receive email notices of board vacancies by calling 240-777-2528 or by writing kathy.zieger@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Please consider giving back to your community in 2004 by volunteering to serve on a board. For more information, please call the number above. For other volunteer opportunities, please contact the Volunteer Center in the County Executive's office at 240-777-2600.

Latino Health Initiative

from page 3

The LHI is comprised of staff members from the Department of Health and Human Services and a group of volunteer professionals representing national and local organizations. These individuals work as a team to inform the Latino community about the LHI and to collect feedback regarding health concerns. In addition, this group acts as the planning body for the LHI.

The core objectives of the Department of Health and Human Services Latino Health Initiative focus on mobilizing public and private partnerships that:

- Enhance coordination between existing programs and provide technical assistance to programs and services for Latinos
- Develop and support models of programs and services to adequately reach Latinos
- Advise individuals in decision-making positions regarding policies and practices needed to effectively reach and serve Latinos.

For more information on the Latino Health Initiative, please contact Sonia Mora at (240) 777-1779.

Black History Month *from page 1*

We honor these individuals by learning as much as possible about their lives and achievements. We can draw on their strength, dedication and courage to overcome obstacles in our own time.

Although not every segment of African American society has realized the promise of the civil rights movement, many African Americans have greatly benefited from the efforts of those who struggled to maintain the possibility of the American Dream for all Americans. Some noted African Americans include Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the "Father of Negro History"; Benjamin O. Davis, Brigadier General in the United States Army; Horance Pippin, artistic genius; C.B. Powell, editor and publisher; Arthur Schomburg, bibliophile; and Frederick M. James, inventor.

One way to celebrate Black History Month is to learn how black people have enriched civilization, or to hold discussions with teachers, friends and parents, or to explore black heritage and sharing it with others. Another way is to participate in Black History Month activities sponsored by the Office of Community Outreach in the Offices of the County Executive.

The theme for 2004's celebration is "An African American Night at the Movies" to be held during the first week of February. Please call Christine Clarke at (240)-777-2500 for more details and information.

Director of Volunteer Center Presents at Tokyo Seminars

Andrea Jolly, director of the Volunteer Center in the Offices of the County Executive, was honored last year and selected to present at a series of seminars on volunteerism sponsored by the Tokyo Voluntary Action Center. The seminars were funded by the Points of Light Foundation through the Center for Global Partnerships. Andrea joined three colleagues from similar volunteer centers in Orange County CA, Baton Rouge LA, and Council Bluffs IA on the October trip.

In Japan, volunteerism is still in the embryonic stages. Japanese corporations and nonprofit organizations are seeking to increase the role of volunteerism in their society.

An interpreter accompanied the group during the weeklong trip, but Andrea still often heard the English term "volunteer center" sprinkled amidst conversations in Japanese. Volunteerism is so foreign to Japanese culture that there is no term for the concept in the Japanese language, so the English term is borrowed and placed in use.

The goal of the seminars was to incorporate American volunteerism practices to fit in Japanese society. Andrea discovered that denial is one reason why volunteerism is not prevalent in Japan. Recognition of the disadvantaged must come before resources are steered to help those in need. Japan has focused on industrialization and modernization since the end of World War II, with less attention given to the underprivileged. With changes in economic conditions, there is now a greater recognition in Japan of society's less fortunate.

Although no stranger to international travel, Andrea found this trip extremely interesting because it allowed her to engage with the host country's culture and people in a much more intense fashion. The big lesson that Andrea brings back is a better appreciation of the differences on how volunteerism is viewed in Japan and in other societies. For the Volunteer Center, this means a greater emphasis on educating Montgomery County's diverse communities on the benefits and rewards of volunteering and serving one's community.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities in Montgomery County, please call (240) 777-2600 or visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov and click Volunteers, and then Volunteer Center.



County Executive Douglas M. Duncan has announced his selection for Police Chief – Fairfax County Chief J. Thomas Manger, following an extensive six-month national search and an evaluation process that included a series of focus groups with various community groups and other public input. Manger grew up in Montgomery County, graduating from Blair High School and University of Maryland.

Martin Luther King from page 1

Commission and the Corporation for National Service to jointly promote the holiday as a national day of service. Montgomery County's Martin Luther King, Jr., Commemorative Committee has designated January 19 as the day of the 2004 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday Celebration. The ceremony will begin at 3:00 p.m. at Montgomery College, Germantown Campus, in the Globe Hall Auditorium. Montgomery County, the cities of Gaithersburg and Takoma Park, and the Town of Garrett Park co-sponsor the annual program.

"Living the Dream" is the theme for 2004. The keynote speaker is Pastor Donell Peterman of The Joshua Group Ministries. Several groups and individuals will provide musical entertainment. A reception will immediately follow the program.

The event will also feature presentations of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award and Children of the Dream Awards. The annual awards recognize County residents and students who have demonstrated a commitment to perpetuating the goals and ideas of the civil rights leader. In addition, the City of Gaithersburg will announce the winners of the 12th Annual Literary Arts contest, which it cosponsors with the Gazette Newspapers.

The program is free. Those attending are asked to bring a nonperishable food item for a needy family. For more information, call Chrstine Clarke at 240-777-2500.

African American Health Program

Founded in 1999 with the support of County Executive Douglas M. Duncan and the County Council, the African American Health Program (AAHP) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) works to reduce and eliminate disparities faced by African Americans in the areas of infant mortality, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and oral and prostate cancers.

AAHP provides education to the community about healthy life choices and clinical support with screenings at health fairs and individual case management. For example, to reduce infant mortality, high risk pregnancies are referred to an AAHP nurse case manager. Women likely to have complications in during pregnancy are referred to the program, regardless of income level.

HHS has identified oral cancer as a more recent disparity, particularly in African American men who use tobacco or alcohol. In response, AAHP has contacted barber shops in selected neighborhoods to train barbers to be promoters of oral health. In the course of their work, barbers encourage customers to obtain oral cancer screening.

While its focus is on the African American community, AAHP programs are however open to all residents. AAHP is also working with the Latino Health Initiative and the Asian Pacific American community to develop and advance health programs in these communities. For more information on the African American Health Program, please call Lizzie James at (240) 777-1055.

To Our Readers:

In Touch has been reformatted to provide easier reading. In addition, in order to increase our readership and decrease costs, we will be sending most editions via the internet. However, we will continue to print hardcopies for those wishing to continue receiving future editions through regular surface mail.

Please call (240) 777-2500 or email InTouch@montgomerycountymd.gov to be added to the mailing list, or to let us know your preference for receiving *In Touch* by email or surface mail. We thank you for your readership, and welcome your input.

CommunityEvents January

Jan. 15, Thursday 6-8 pm: Rockville Library African American Book Discussion Group discusses Edward Jones' *The Known World*, judged as one of best reviewed books in 2003 by *The Washington Post*. 99 Maryland Ave., Rockville. Call (240) 777-0078.

Jan. 19, Monday at 3:30 pm: Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. See article on page 1.

Jan. 24, Saturday at 11:30 am: Chinese Culture and Community Service Center sponsors Lunar New Year Festival. Center Courtyard, Lake Forest Mall, 701 Russell Ave., Gaithersburg. Call (240) 631-1200.

Jan. 30, Friday at 2 pm: Grand opening of Montgomery College's Health Sciences Center at Takoma Park Campus. 7977 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. RSVP by Jan. 20 to (301) 650-1688.

Office of Community Outreach
Offices of County Executive Douglas M. Duncan
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity

Montgomery County's Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity offers many free classes, events, seminars and programs. Topics include:

- Immigration and citizenship
- Small business development
- Tax assistance
- Free health screening
- How to use a computer and the internet
- How to find a job and write a resume
- Drug and alcohol prevention
- Free legal help on civil cases.

Please call (240) 777-4940 or visit the website www.GilchristCenter.org for more information and class schedules. The Gilchrist Center is located at 11319 Elkin Street in Wheaton, near University Boulevard, and can be reached by public transportation.



inTouch

Address Correction Requested